

Business Standard

Large number of vacancies of MO's, nurses and supporting staff in UP under PICU

The central government is seized of the grave issue of encephalitis and taking steps to deal with the challenge, Health and Family Welfare Minister J.P. Nadda said on Thursday.

"We are doing our part from the central government. We provide financial and technical support to the states. But health is essentially a state subject and the implementation role thus remains with the states," Nadda told the Lok Sabha.

BJP member Yogi Adityanath said the disease -- which causes inflammation of the brain -- had taken an "ominous" turn in eastern Uttar Pradesh and had spread to West Bengal and Assam too.

Nadda said the healthy life of children was certainly a "responsibility" of the centre and the Modi government was committed to help people.

He said starting an AIIMS in Gorkhpur will go a long way in addressing the health issues in eastern Uttar Pradesh.

On July 22, Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of a new All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS).

"However, one point needs to be stressed is (that) health is a state subject and implementation is state responsibility," Nadda said.

But he said that often the state governments were not able to make use of funds and take concrete steps to check the malady.

"Despite support from central government, out of 20 Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU), only 10 PICU have been established in UP. There are a large number of vacancies of medical officers, nurses and supporting staff affecting the implementation of the programme," he said.

"As on April 1, though there is unspent balance of Rs 33.47 crore, an amount of Rs. 17.50 crore has been allocated to the state in the current year for vector borne disease control. The capacity of funds needs improvement in effective disease control," Nadda said.

"The Centre can give money for deployment of doctors. But deployment of doctors in the districts and remote areas are the state's responsibility. This needs to be understood."

He said the same yardstick would apply to other states including West Bengal. This resulted in some comments from Congress member Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury from the state.

Chowdhury said nearly eight districts in his state were hit by encephalitis and the West Bengal government was unable to fight the disease.

This was strongly countered by Trinamool Congress floor leader Sudip Bandyopadhyay, who insisted that such falsehoods had led to the Congress party's defeat in elections.

As members got into a row, a visibly upset Speaker Sumitra Mahajan told them not to fight over medical issues.

Mulayam Singh Yadav (Samajwadi Party) and Jagdambika Pal (BJP) also spoke.

At one point, Yadav rushed to Yogi Adityanath and BJP veteran L.K. Advani and tried to make a point to them.

CPI-M's Mohammed Salim lamented that even after providing vaccination, the spread of the disease had not stopped.